In the Claims:

Amend claims 1, 2 and 5 to read as follows:

1. (Twice Amended) A monolithic ceramic filter comprising a honeycomb structure comprising cells of a unitary extruded structure along an elongation axis and partitioned by a partition wall formed of a porous ceramic material, wherein an increased thickness portion of said partition wall of the honeycomb structure has an increased thickness as compared to a remaining basic portion of the partition wall, said increased thickness portion constituting a reduced flow resistance portion which continuously extends from an interior of the honeycomb structure to a lateral outer wall surface of the honeycomb structure so as to form a continuous flow path of reduced flow resistance as compared to the flow resistance of the remaining basic portion of the partition wall within the increased thickness portion along the partition wall extending over a plurality of cells to reach said lateral outer wall surface of the honeycomb structure,

said lateral outer wall surface extending substantially parallel to the elongation axis of the cells, and

said increased thickness portion continuously extending over substantially an entire axial length of the honeycomb structure along the elongation axis of the cells.

2. (Amended) The ceramic filter as defined in claim 1, wherein said reduced flow resistance portion has at least one filtrate discharge conduit opening extending to said lateral outer wall surface of the honeycomb structure within the increased thickness of the reduced flow resistance portion.

5. (Amended) The ceramic filter as defined in claim 3, wherein said reduced flow resistance portion comprises a plurality of wall portions of increased thickness which extend parallel to each other.